Mobile App Development Course During Lockdown: A Reflection

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Abstract

This paper reviews the experiences of delivering a level seven mobile app development course during COVID-19 lockdown in the first semester of 2020 at Ara Institute of Canterbury. During the main assessment in the course the students were required to develop a series of prototypes for an app for a client. The experiences of this course are analysed from a range of perspectives including student engagement, the use of educational technologies, and the development of soft skills. The purpose of this paper is to present an analysis of how aspects of the course were altered to enable to the course to continue during lockdown. A brief literature review is presented that covers the importance of different forms of student engagement, authentic learning activities and the importance of soft skills for IT graduates A description of how the main assessment was structured to provide an authentic learning activity (Reeves, Herrington & Oliver, 2002) and how different aspects of the delivery of the course promoted different aspects of student engagement (Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004). A reflection on how the process enhanced the soft skills of the students and the importance of this for IT graduates is included (Stevens & Norman, 2016; Beard, Schweiger & Surendran. 2019). The way in which the paper is presented in consistent with the concept of reflective practice (Ganly, 2018). Several aspects in which the delivery of the course changed will be continued with in the future, with these being discussed. Conclusions highlight the success of how the course was delivered during trying circumstances with the aspects that will be used in the future being highlighted.

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